



## **ANTI-BULLYING POLICY**

### **ST AUGUSTINE'S SCHOOL**

This policy was adopted by the board on \_\_\_\_\_

To be reviewed by \_\_\_\_\_

Chairperson of the BOM \_\_\_\_\_

Principal & Secretary of the BOM \_\_\_\_\_

Implementation Date \_\_\_\_\_

Date set for Review \_\_\_\_\_



## **Augustine's School – Anti-Bullying Policy (Draft)**

1. In accordance with the requirements of the Education (Welfare) Act 2000 and the code of behaviour guidelines issued by the NEWB, the Board of Management of Saint Augustine's school has adopted the following anti-bullying policy within the framework of the school's overall code of behaviour. This policy fully complies with the requirements of the Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools which were published in September 2013.

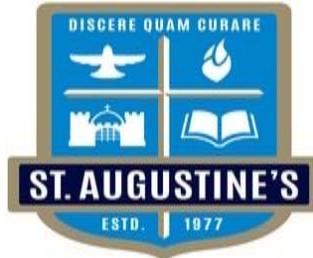
2. The Board of Management recognises the very serious nature of bullying and the negative impact that it can have on the lives of pupils and is therefore fully committed to the following key principles of best practice in preventing and tackling bullying behaviour:

- A positive school culture and climate which is welcoming of difference and diversity and is based on inclusivity.
- Encourages pupils to disclose and discuss incidents of bullying behaviour in a non-threatening environment.
- Promotes respectful relationships across the school community.
- Effective leadership.
- A school-wide approach.
- A shared understanding of what bullying is and its impact.
- Implementation of education and prevention strategies (including awareness raising measures) that build empathy, respect and resilience in pupils and explicitly address the issues of cyberbullying and identity-based bullying, including in particular, homophobic and transphobic bullying.
- Effective supervision and monitoring of pupils.
- Support for staff.
- Consistent recording, investigation and follow up of bullying behaviour (including use of established intervention strategies).
- On-going evaluation of the effectiveness of the Anti-bullying Policy.

3. In accordance with the Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools bullying is defined as follows: Bullying is unwanted negative behaviour, verbal, psychological or physical conduct, by an individual or group against another person (or persons) and which is repeated over time.

The following types of bullying behaviour are included in the definition of bullying:

- Deliberate exclusion
- Malicious gossip and other forms of relational bullying
- Cyber-bullying
- Identity-based bullying including Sexual Orientation
- Bullying of those with disabilities or special educational needs



Isolated or once-off incidents of intentional negative behaviour, including a once-off offensive or hurtful text message or other private messaging, do not fall within the definition of bullying and should be dealt with, as appropriate, in accordance with the school's code of behaviour.

However, in the context of this policy, placing a once-off offensive or hurtful public message, image or statement on a social network site or other public forum where that message, image or statement can be viewed and/or repeated by other people will be regarded as bullying behaviour.

Negative behaviour that does not meet this definition of bullying will be dealt with in accordance with the school's code of behaviour. Additional information on different types of bullying is set out in Section 2 of the Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools.

4. The relevant staff for investigating and dealing with bullying are as follows:

- Maeve Lynch, Acting Principal
- Angela Flanagan, Deputy Principal
- Alma Conroy, Teacher
- Paul O' Shea, Behaviour Coordinator

5. The education and prevention strategies (including strategies specifically aimed at cyberbullying and identity-based bullying including in particular, homophobic and transphobic bullying) that will be used by the school are as follows:

- Constantly and consistently reinforcing the unacceptability of bullying behaviour.
- Ensuring that members of school staff have sufficient familiarity with the school's anti-bullying policy to enable them to effectively and consistently apply the policy when required.
- Ensuring appropriate arrangements to ensure that temporary and substitute staff have sufficient awareness of the school's code of behaviour and its anti-bullying policy.
- Prevention and awareness raising measures across all aspects of bullying through both curricular (CSPE, SPHE & RSE) and extracurricular activities.
- Continuous Professional Development for relevant staff in the delivery of these programs.
- Regular Whole Staff Professional Development on the subject of bullying.
- Public display of the Anti-Bullying Statement or Code in both classrooms and school common areas.
- Recognition of the school's obligation to take all reasonable precautions to ensure the safety of pupils and to participate in supervising pupils during school time and during all school related activities.
- Ongoing creation, review and implementation of school policies which relate to bullying such as the Child Protection Policy, Code of Behaviour, Trips Policy, Mobile Phone Policy, Safety Statement etc
- Fostering respect amongst all members of the school community and encouraging through positive, formal and informal interactions and interventions a culture of mutual respect and support.



- That the school's Anti-Bullying Policy, Statement and Code (all attached) are understood by all students and parents, with both parties signing an understanding of and commitment to abiding by/supporting the school in implementing the same.
- Encourage a culture of reporting by communicating via the aforementioned media that reporting bullying (be it as victim, bystander or perpetrator) is the correct and responsible thing to do, and providing students with the means by which to do so such as:
  - Making an approach to a trusted staff member at an appropriate time.
  - The completion of a confidential student questionnaire on a bi-annual basis.
  - Making available the means by which students can contact the school via phone, text or email.
  - Encouraging all parents to inform the school immediately should they have any concerns relating to bullying.

6. The school's procedures for investigation, follow-up and recording of bullying behaviour and the established intervention strategies used by the school for dealing with cases of bullying behaviour are as follows:

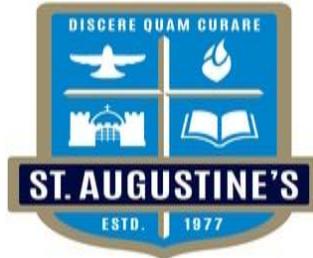
- All reports, including anonymous reports of bullying must be investigated and dealt with by the relevant teacher.
- The confidence factor is vital with pupils who report bullying assured that they are behaving responsibly.
- Non-teaching staff such as Community Workers, Youth Workers, Secretaries, Bean A Ti, Special Needs Assistants (SNAs), Caretakers, Cleaners or other associated school personnel must be encouraged to report any incidents of bullying behaviour witnessed by them, or mentioned to them, to the relevant teacher.
- Parents and pupils are required to cooperate with any investigation and assist the school in resolving any issues and restoring, as far as is practicable, the relationships of the parties involved as quickly as possible.
- All incoming pupils together with their parents will, as aforesaid, be made aware of the school's approach from the outset and expected to sign and understand, and support the same.

#### **Reporting Incidents:**

- Any pupil or parent can bring a bullying concern/incident to the attention of any staff member in the school.
- Staff members must report any incidents of bullying behaviour witnessed by them, or mentioned to them to the relevant teacher.
- Information will be recorded on the internal school reporting system and share with all staff for immediate access

#### **Investigating Incidents:**

- All reports, including anonymous reports of bullying will be investigated and dealt with by the relevant teacher along with the Wellbeing and Welfare team if required.



- In investigating a reported incident of bullying the relevant teacher will employ our therapeutic modelling of managing all behaviours.
- All parties involved in, or witness to the reported incident will, if necessary, be asked to co-operate with any investigation.
- All interviews will be conducted with sensitivity and with due regard to the rights of all concerned.
- The Right to Be Heard will be central to the process.
- Where a group is alleged to be involved, each member should be interviewed individually at first. Thereafter, each member of the group will be asked to write down their account of the incident.
- The primary aim in investigating and dealing with bullying is to resolve any issues and to restore, as far as practicable, the relationships of the parties involved.
- In cases where it has been determined by the relevant teacher that bullying has occurred, the parents of the parties involved should be contacted to inform them of the matter and explain the procedures which follow:
  - The initial report and record of the investigation will be forwarded to the School Disciplinary Committee for assessment in line with the School's Code of Behaviour and guiding Ethos.
  - The Wellbeing and Welfare Team will determine in line with the School's Code of Behaviour and guide Ethos the appropriate response to the incident of bullying.
  - Regardless of the seriousness of the incident the response will automatically prompt a formative, supportive intervention via a mandatory 121 workshop delivered by the Wellbeing and Welfare Team with a view to enabling the perpetrator/s to see the situation from the victim's perspective/s, understand the importance of peer respect and support and where required formulate an approach to deter future involvement in such incidents.
  - Should a disciplinary sanction be required it is on the understanding that this is a private matter between the school, the pupil being disciplined and their parents.
  - Any disciplinary sanction imposed will be communicated to the parents via phone and letter.
  - Should a suspension be required the parents will be informed via the suspension procedure; with the parents called on the phone, a text sent detailing the date when the suspension ends and a letter detailing the reason for suspension, the dates of the suspension and the means by which the student/s will be positively reintegrated into the school upon their return.
  - The imposing of any sanction also triggers student participation in a mandatory 121 workshop delivered by the Wellbeing and Welfare Team with a view to enabling the perpetrator/s to see the situation from the victim/s perspective/s, understand the importance of peer respect and support and where required formulate an approach to deter future involvement in such incidents.
  - The victim/s of the bullying incident will also be spoken to by the Wellbeing and Welfare Team within a mandatory 121 to determine in the first instance their current



impression of the incident, and where required to formulate an approach to support the victim/s within any future involvement in such incidents.

### **Follow Up**

In determining whether a bullying case has been adequately and appropriately addressed the relevant teacher will assess:

- Whether the bullying behaviour has ceased.
- Whether the issues and relationships between the parties have been resolved as far as is practicable.
- Whether a follow up meeting is required between both perpetrators and victim/s
- Through feedback with parent/s, the current status of the victim/s in the school week following the event.

### **Recording**

- The school commits to recording all bullying incidents in an objective, factual manner which is electronically shared for immediate access always.
- Information pertaining to all aspects of the process outlined above will be stored in line with necessary requirements.
- Where the relevant teacher is not the Principal, the relevant teacher in this instance must inform the principal of incidents being investigated, and record and act as directed herein.

### **Appeals**

- Where a parent/s is not satisfied that the school has dealt with a bullying case in accordance with the detailed procedures, the parent/s are to be referred to the school's complaints procedures, i.e. the Principal or B.O.M.
- In the event that a parent/guardian has exhausted the school's complaints procedures and is still unsatisfied, the school must advise the parent/s of their right to make a complaint to the Ombudsman for Children.

### **Relating to Staff**

- In cases where the reporting staff member considers that the bullying behaviour has not been adequately and appropriately addressed within 20 school days the recording template at Appendix 3 in the Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools can be used to address the same.

### **Supplementary Responses**

- In cases where a school has serious concerns in relation to managing the behaviour of a pupil, the advice of the National Education Psychological Service (NEPS) will be sought.
- In relation to bullying in schools, Children First National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children 2011 (Children First) and the Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools provide that in situations where "the incident is serious and where the behaviour is regarded as potentially abusive, the school must consult the HSE Children and



Family Social Services with a view to drawing up an appropriate response, such as a management plan”.

- Serious instances of bullying behaviour should, in accordance with the Children First and the Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools, be referred to the HSE Children and Family Services and/or Gardaí as appropriate.
- The Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools also provide that where school personnel have concerns about a child but are not sure whether to report the matter to the HSE, the Designated Liaison Person must seek advice from the HSE Children and Family Social Services.

7. The school’s programme of support for working with pupils affected by bullying is as follows:

- The victim/s of the bullying incident will also be spoken to by the Wellbeing and Welfare Team within a mandatory 121 to determine in the first instance their current impression of the incident, and where required to formulate an approach to support the victim/s within any future involvement in such incidents.
- This process will be designed to raise the victims self-esteem, to develop friendships and social skills and to build resilience.
- Should pupils, both victims and perpetrators alike require supports other than the in house interventions and supports, the school will endeavour to liaise with the appropriate individuals and agencies to arrange, in conjunction with the pupils parents these supports.
- All pupils should be encouraged to understand that there are no innocent bystanders and that all incidents of bullying behaviour must be reported.

8. The Board of Management confirms that appropriate supervision and monitoring policies and practices are in place to both prevent and deal with bullying behaviour and to facilitate early intervention where possible.

9. The Board of Management confirms that the school will, in accordance with its obligations under equality legislation, take all such steps that are reasonably practicable to prevent the sexual harassment of pupils or staff or the harassment of pupils or staff on any of the nine grounds specified i.e. gender including transgender, civil status, family status, sexual orientation, religion, age, disability, race and membership of the Traveller community.

10. This policy was adopted by the Board of Management on \_\_\_\_\_.

11. This policy has been made available to school personnel, published on the school website, or is otherwise readily accessible to parents and pupils on request. A copy of this policy will be made available to the Department and the patron if requested.

12. This policy and its implementation will be reviewed by the Board of Management once in every school year. Written notification that the review has been completed will be made available to school personnel, published on the school website or where none exists, be otherwise readily accessible to



parents and pupils on request. A record of the review and its outcome will be made available, if requested, to the patron and the Department.



## Bullying Report Sheet

**1. Name of pupil being bullied and class group:**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Class: \_\_\_\_\_

**2. Name(s) and class(es) of pupil(s) engaged in bullying behaviour:**

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<b>3. Source of bullying concern/report (tick relevant box(es))*</b>		<b>Additional Info</b>	<b>4. Location of incidents (tick relevant box(es))*</b>		<b>Additional Info</b>
			School Yard		
Pupil concerned			Classroom		
Other Pupil			Corridor		
Parent			Toilets		
Staff Member			School Bus		
Other			Other		

**5. Name of person(s) who reported the bullying concern:**

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**6. Type of Bullying Behaviour (tick relevant box(es))\***

Physical Aggression		Cyber-bullying	
Damage to Property		Intimidation	



Isolation/Exclusion		Malicious Gossip	
Name Calling		Other (specify)	

**7. Where behaviour is regarded as identity-based bullying, indicate the relevant category:**

Homophobic	Disability/SEN related	Racist	Membership of Traveller community	Other (specify)

**8. Brief Description of bullying behaviour and its impact:**



**9. Details of actions taken:**

**Signed:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date submitted to Principal/Deputy Principal:** \_\_\_\_\_



# **Anti-Bullying** **Statement**

**Bullying is**  
**unacceptable and will**  
**not be tolerated in**  
**our school.**



## Anti-Bullying Code

### You MUST not:

- Hurt another person physically or emotionally.
- Threaten or intimidate another person.
- Deliberately exclude or isolate another person.
- Use any digital or electronic device to affect another person's dignity.
- Disrespect another person's physical space.

**\*Excuses such as “I was messing” or “I didn’t mean to” will not be accepted where a student is hurt either physically or emotionally\***

***Bullying***



## *Observation/Concern Sheet*

<i>Staff Name</i>	<i>Pupil Name(s)</i>
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Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

### **Anti-Bullying Contract**

**The management of St. Augustine's expect students to:**

- Respect the school
- Respect the staff



- Respect each other

Bullying breaks this rule, because if you hurt, threaten or frighten someone you are not treating them with respect.

**Bullying is not acceptable and will not be tolerated in our school.**

**You must not:**

- Hurt another person physically or emotionally.
- Threaten or intimidate another person.
- Deliberately exclude or isolate another person.
- Use any digital or electronic device to affect another person's dignity.
- Disrespect another person's physical space.

**\*Excuses such as "I was messing" or "I didn't mean to" will not be accepted where a student is hurt either physically or emotionally\***

This applies in and out of class, on corridors, by technological device and on the way to and from school.

All reported incidences of bullying will be recorded and investigated which could lead to punishment, up to and including suspension and possible expulsion.

**If you are bullied or if you know someone else who is being bullied you must tell someone, a teacher or your parents, and you will be helped.**

I understand the Anti-Bullying Contract outlined above and assure my support of same.

**Student Signature** \_\_\_\_\_

**Parent Signature** \_\_\_\_\_